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AMERICAN VIEWS ON CUBAN INTERVENTION IN AFRICA

ANNCR: VOA NEWS ANALYST RONALD J. DUNLAVEY DISCUSSES THE DEBATE NOW GOING ON IN THE UNITED STATES ABOUT THE CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA:

VOICE:

IN RECENT WEEKS, SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WARNED THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT TOLERATE FURTHER CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTIONS LIKE THE ONE IN ANGOLA. THOSE WARNINGS IMMEDIATELY TOUCHED OFF A WAVE OF SPECULATION IN THE PRESS -- "IMAGINATIVE SCENARIOS," AS ONE OBSERVER PUT IT, ABOUT WHAT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT DO. (OPT.) THE SPECULATION RANGED FROM OUTRIGHT MILITARY STEPS IN AFRICA OR CUBA TO POSSIBLE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS. (END OPT.) IT REACHED THE POINT WHERE SOME CLARIFICATION SEEMED DESIRABLE. BUT IT IS ALSO OBVIOUS THAT WASHINGTON HAS DELIBERATELY AVOIDED BEING SPECIFIC ON WHAT MIGHT BE DONE---AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE NON-SPECIFIC---PRECISELY BECAUSE IT WANTS TO REMAIN FLEXIBLE. (OPT.) THEREFORE, NOTHING IS BEING PUT IN CONCRETE TERMS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME NOTHING IS BEING RULED OUT. TO USE THAT MUCH-OVERWORKED PHRASE, THE UNITED STATES IS "REVIEWING ITS OPTIONS." (END OPT.)

IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, THE TENDENCY HAS BEEN TO DOWNPLAY SOME OF THE MORE LURID SPECULATION. LAST FRIDAY, TESTIFYING BEFORE A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE, MR. KISSINGER SAID THAT CONTINGENCY PLANNING IS UNDERWAY AT THE PENTAGON, BUT THAT THERE IS---IN HIS WORDS---NO URGENT SITUATION REQUIRING A CRISIS DECISION. THE PENTAGON REVIEW, HE SAID, WAS "PRECAUTIONARY. (OPT) SAID MR. KISSINGER: "WE SHOULD NOT LOOK AT THE IMMEDIATE SITUATION IN

TERMS OF PLANNING A NEW MOVE IN ANY TIME FRAME THAT IS NOW IMMEDIATELY FORESEEABLE. WE ARE RATHER TRYING TO CALL THE ATTENTION OF THE SOVIET UNION AND OF CUBA TO THE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF CONTEMPLATED ACTION. (END OPT) AND IN A NATIONAL TELEVISION APPEARANCE SUNDAY THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, DONALD RUMSFELD, INDICATED THAT THE MILITARY OPTION IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL THAT ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION, INCLUDING POSSIBLE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STEPS THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN. (OPT.) IN FACT, HE ADDED, THE MILITARY OPTION HAS RECEIVED EXAGGERATED PUBLIC ATTENTION WHICH HAS TENDED TO WARP THE DISCUSSION. (END OPT.)

MR. KISSINGER HAS COME IN FOR A FAIR AMOUNT OF CRITICISM. SENATOR MANSFIELD, FOR EXAMPLE---THE SENATE'S MAJORITY LEADER---HAS DESCRIBED THE WARNINGS TO CUBA AS, IN HIS PHRASE, "EMPTY RHETORIC." AND THE NEW YORK TIMES, IN AN EDITORIAL MONDAY MORNING, CALLED ON WASHINGTON TO HALT WHAT IT CALLED "THE PUBLIC PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE" AGAINST CUBA--AT LEAST UNTIL, SAID THE TIMES, IT CAN "POINT TO SOME OVERT ACT OF CUBAN INTERVENTION OR AGGRESSION IN AFRICA OR THE HEMISPHERE OR ELSEWHERE." (OPT.) AND THE TIMES, AS HAVE OTHERS, VOICES THE SUSPICION THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S ADMINISTRATION IS TALKING TOUGH ON THE ISSUE PARTLY OUT OF ELECTION-YEAR CONSIDERATIONS. (END OPT.)

MR. KISSINGER HIMSELF WOULD NO DOUBT ARGUE THAT IT IS TO PREVENT FUTURE ACTS OF CUBAN INTERVENTION OR AGGRESSION THAT HE HAS UTTERED THE WARNINGS HE HAS. AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT HIS STRATEGY HAS SUBSTANTIAL PUBLIC SUPPORT. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY EVIDENT THAT THE ISSUE OF CUBAN INTERVENTION IN AFRICA---OR ELSEWHERE---IS A SENSITIVE AND COMPLEX ONE, BOTH

FROM THE FOREIGN AND THE DOMESTIC STANDPOINT. THE UNITED STATES HAS COME OUT UNEQUIVOCALLY IN FAVOR OF MAJORITY RULE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA -- BUT IT DOES NOT WANT TO SEE CUBAN AND SOVIET INTERVENTION THERE. THE PROBLEM IS TO PROMOTE THE ONE AND TO DISCOURAGE THE OTHER.

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